

**Kenai River Special Management  
Area Advisory Board**

Kenai River Center

Thursday, December 11, 2008

5:30 p.m.

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**A. Members Present:** Ted Wellman, Richard Dykema, George Heim, Adam Reimer, James Czarneski, Bruce King, Milli Martin, Dave Carey, Wayne Ogle, Jason Pawluk, Jack Sinclair, Tim Stevens.

**B. The Minutes** for the November 13, 2008 meeting were approved as written.

**C. Agenda Changes and Approval:** Doug Whitaker of Confluence Research and Consulting was moved from new business to Special Presentations. Also added to special presentations was Ginny Litchfield for a report on the city of Soldotna's Waterline Project. Jack Sinclair requested that item C under Old Business be removed from the agenda. The agenda was approved with changes.

**II. Public Comments:**

Dwight Kramer spoke in favor of the Recreational Use study with the hope that it would provide a clear vision of the river's need for improved management.

Ken Tarbox commented that salmon anglers are not the only user of the river. Ken suggested that the Recreational Use Study should also encompass non-consumptive users. There are 65 watchable wildlife viewing locations on the Kenai Peninsula with several falling along the Kenai River. The review and focus process for the study should keep in mind that there are many other users than just anglers along the river.

Ricky Gease gave an update about the Fish Habitat Partnership. This partnership is in the development stage, creating a mission and vision statement. Next, they will be working on the group's action plan. Also, the Sportfish Guide Services Board task force is drafting legislation to create this board that may also limit guide and transporters across the state.

Mike Crawford informed the board that the Federal Subsistence Board had a meeting in Tazlina, located north-west of Valdez. The agenda contained 5 items that pertained to the Kenai River.

**Special Presentation**

**A. Brad Zubeck, Homer Electric Company,** presented a PowerPoint about development of low impact hydro projects on the Kenai Peninsula. The areas of interest are Grant Lake/Creek, Falls Creek, Ptarmigan Lake and Crescent Lake. These are all part of the Kenai River drainage.

**Doug Whittaker, Confluence Research and Consulting** presented a PowerPoint about how his company will conduct the social science-based study on the experiences of river users. The study will be used to show the impacts of recreation on the river. The actual study will use both observational and surveying tools to gather information. To better understand what questions should be used on the survey, Doug plans

to begin focus groups interviews in late January. Doug wants the survey questions to address more than just problems, but also potential management options.

**Ginny Litchfield, Habitat Biologist for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game**, spoke to KRSMA about the single agency review concerning the Soldotna Waterline project. The main waterline installation to the Kenai Peninsula College will require diverting Slikok Creek to allow trenching across the creek bed to install the waterline pipe underground. The crossing will disturb less than ½ acre. The area will be restored to its original state.

### **III. REPORTS**

#### **A. Reports**

Jack Sinclair, DPOR Superintendent, reported that the Slikok Creek Cultural Resource Management Plan is available on the State Parks Web page.

Tim Stevens, DEC, reported that they have received the draft report from the Oasis on the Kenai River Hydro-carbon sampling that was done in July. It has good quality assurance so the data is good and a final should be ready by the end of the December or early January.

ADF&G- Jason Pawluk, no report at this time.

USF&WS, was not present.

USFS, was not present.

#### **B. Committee Reports**

##### **Guide Advisory did not meet.**

**Habitat**, Adam Reimer reported that the committee met on Monday December 8, 2008. The committee's charge was the three legislative priorities which were compiled in an e-mailed to members. Another priority the committee is tasked with is a draft watershed management plan, with the vehicle to do that is the Kenai River Comprehensive Management Plan habitat section. The group is reviewing that section. The committee will investigate available research on turbidity and its effects on fish and habitat. Many members of the habitat committee attended the Fish Habitat partnership meeting.

**River Use 12/11/08** met at 10 a.m. There was discussion on a drift boat take out on the lower river, continued funding for the river use study and implementation, legislative framework for the river user fees, funding for redoing the comprehensive management plan, education for all Kenai River users and a presentation was given by District Ranger Jacques Kosto and Steve Meyer to bring forward an action item to change the ½ mile limit for duck hunting on the Kenai River Flats to a ¼ mile.

**Permits did not meet.**

**Legislative/Government Activities did not meet.**

**Board Development, 12/11/08** met at 4 p.m. There was discussion about the dates for the board development meeting on January 21, 2009 and the KR Comprehensive Management Plan review meeting

set for February 21, 2009. The board will be electing a new President and Vice President at the January meeting.

Regarding our current membership, Milli Martin, the Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly President, appointed herself as the KPB representative to the KRSMA board. Dave Carey had an informal discussion with City of Soldotna Mayor Micciche prior to the meeting and was informed that he would be replaced as the City of Soldotna representative. Dave Carey offered his services as a facilitator/moderator to the KRSMA board if the next President of the Advisory Board requested him to do so.

**Agenda/Board Structure/Housekeeping did not meet.**

**IV. OLD BUSINESS ACTION ITEMS**

**A.** Discussion on Legislative briefing priorities.

This will be the main focus of the January meeting. Dave Carey also suggested that the KRSMA board fully partner with the Borough Assembly by way of bringing our priorities before their assembly for a vote. The consensus opinion was that this was a win-win in that if the Borough agrees to support the Board's list (or parts of it) then it strengthens the board's position and if not the Board is free to proceed autonomously. It was also suggested that the KRSMA board's city reps could do the same thing for their city councils.

With reference to the committee priorities only a partial number of board members had received the habitat committee's priorities.

George Heim discussed the River Use Committee legislative items but clarified that further discussion was necessary before a list could be generated.

Dave Carey also alerted the Board to a special Borough working group he was forming: a task force-of sorts- to deal with water resources. It is not a fish task force but water-related task force. He was hopeful at least one KRSMA member would serve on this water-working group.

At this point he saw their main focus divided as follows:

1st quarter: KRSMA legislative priorities.

2nd quarter: planning for KPB's role in the Fish Habitat Partnership.

3rd quarter: Cook Inlet Beluga endangered species listing.

4th quarter: Kenai River overlay district within the borough.

Lastly, on the topic of legislative priorities the borough dug up a old letter from November 30, 2005 from the KRSMA board to Representatives Seaton, Chenault and others on the topic of land additions near Cooper Landing. Assuming the issue still had our support Rep. Seaton planned to sponsor a bill to that effect this session. Jack Sinclair agreed to update/expand the letter to reflect our current land addition request.

**B.** Jack Sinclair stated that the dates for the board development have been set for January 31, 2009 and the date for the Comprehensive Plan review is set for February 21, 2009. Both meetings will be held at the Kenai River Center.

The Board voted to adopt January 31 as the date for the Board development workshop with Lynne Curry and Feb 21 date for the KR Comp Plan review with State Planner, Monica Alvarez, facilitating.

**V. NEW BUSINESS- none**

**VI. CORRESPONDENCE- none**

**VII. PUBLIC COMMENT-**

Dwight Kramer asked Director James King for his thoughts about the Recreational Use Study. James responded that the study is moving forward and he is looking forward to working with the group in developing the questions. The final report will be used to determine what will be the best changes for the river.

Dwight also asked Tim Stevens about the Hydrocarbon report.

Tim Stevens reported that all the data has been collected from middle River from May to September.

Analysis of the data in conjunction with natural conditions will take time to develop a final report.

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

**A. Board Comments**

Adam has tried to drum up support for an idea concerning what the KRSMA board and State Parks is going to do with the river use study once it is completed. He wanted the board to think about the concept of following through and implementing the findings. Is the Board and State Parks committed to act on what is recommended once the report is finish?

James King stated that once the report is complete, is will be used to make management decisions for the Kenai River SMA.

Dick Dykema commented that we have a lot of committees and looks forward to future action items.

Jim Czarnezki stated that it has been a good year for the KRSMA Board in redefining itself.

**B. Date/Agenda of Next Meeting January 8, 2009 5:30 p.m.**